



PRESS RELEASE: Short film submissions open & jury revealed for Norwich Film Festival 2021

The BAFTA and BIFA qualifying Norwich Film Festival (NFF), the fastest growing film festival in the UK, has officially started accepting short film submissions for its 2021 film festival, alongside the confirmation of the first members of the 2021 jury.

Following on from the success of the 2020 festival, which saw screenings move online due to lockdown restrictions, NFF2021 is set to once again feature a wide selection of ground-breaking short films from local, national and international filmmakers. The festival features a total of six award categories, including prizes for the best British, International, Documentary, Animation, Student and East Anglian films, with each being awarded a £1000 cash prize. The festival also features an out-of-competition 'One Minute Movie' category, tasking filmmakers with producing a film lasting exactly sixty seconds, and submitting it to the festival for just £1.50.

Kellen Playford (Founder & Lead Consultant) said: " Despite the challenges we all faced during 2020, I was thrilled to see so many artists and filmmakers find a way to continue with their work and create so many fantastic films under dire circumstances. We took a chance by moving our last festival online, but we were really supported by our audiences both locally and further-afield who all watched online in huge numbers. With the potential of a successful vaccine being rolled out this year, we are hoping to put on a blended festival in 2021, mixing live events and screenings with a more in-depth online festival presence, offering the best of both worlds to our audience and filmmakers."

Filmmakers can submit any short films lasting less than 25 minutes to the festival via the FilmFreeway website (<https://filmfreeway.com/NorwichFilmFestival>), with submission fees starting from £15 for East Anglian filmmakers before the Early Bird deadline on 14th February; submissions from the rest of the UK and abroad start from £20. The regular deadline for submissions will be on 6th June, with full details about fees and rules available here: <https://www.norwichfilmfestival.co.uk/submit/>.

The festival has also announced the first members of its 2021 jury, with these esteemed judges from throughout the film industry being tasked with selecting the winning short films in each category. The names announced so far include BAFTA-winning actress **Jessica Hynes** (*Spaced*, *Years and Years*, *Paddington 2*) and acclaimed radio & television host **Edith Bowman**. The panel so far also includes two festival alumni – Maryam Mohajer (BAFTA Short Animation winner 2020) and Norfolk-born writer and director William McGregor (*His Dark Materials*, *The Beekeeper*). Further additions to the panel are set to be announced in the coming weeks and months.

More information about submissions and judges can be found at <http://www.norwichfilmfestival.co.uk/>.
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NOTES FOR EDITORS

- A selection of related images for press use can be found at: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1efiqHoFkNx9TUkA5MNMstNT_yU7LM4eU?usp=sharing.
- In 2009 Kellen Playford founded Norwich Film Festival after hearing about the difficulties a friend was having trying to organise a local screening of a short film.
- The Festival was re-launched in 2012 as an annual event and has since screened hundreds of fantastic short films in Norwich, while helping to promote and support filmmakers and is supported by Norwich BID, Norwich City Council and the BFI.
- Norwich Film Festival became a charity in 2017 (Registered Charity Number: 1173950) and now has a Board of Trustees chaired by John Gordon-Saker (Owner, JGSNorwich), Alex Saunders (Leathes Prior Solicitors), Tilly Crumpton-Taylor (Management Accountant, Brown & Co), Keith M Johnston (Professor

of Film and Television, UEA), Lucy Ward (Owner, Wavelength Films), Fiona Ryder (Owner, TCD Media) and Penny Bartram (Marketing Manager, Norwich/Cambridge Tech Corridor).

- As a BAFTA and BIFA accredited short film festival, any short film screened at Norwich Film Festival can be submitted to both organisations for consideration.
- Norwich Film Festival hosts six competitive categories including; British Short, International Short, Animated Short, Documentary Short, Student Short and East Anglian Short, with prizes being awarded for each. There is also an out-of-competition One Minute Film category.
- In 2020 the festival temporarily moved to an online format due to COVID-19, with over 150 short films available to watch online throughout the four-week festival.
- The precise format and dates of the 2021 festival will be confirmed closer to the event due to the unpredictable nature of the current global situation, though the festival is expected to run in November regardless of format.